

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of: Albrecht von Linde

Group Art Unit: 3671

Serial No.: 10/537,041

Examiner: Addie, Raymond W.

Filed: November 29, 2005

Docket No.: 1406/275

Confirmation No.: 1321

For: DEVICE AND METHOD FOR MODIFYING THE LAYOUT OF A VEHICLE
RACING COURSE

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AMENDMENT B

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

This is responsive to the Final Office Action dated December 3, 2008, for which a shortened statutory period for reply has been extended up to and including April 3, 2009. A petition for a one-month Extension of Time is submitted herewith. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested in view of the following Amendments and Remarks.

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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A device for modifying the layout of a vehicle racing course in a wide track section of a track, said track section being arranged substantially within a track plane, said device comprising an arrangement consisting of individual curb elements located in the region of this track section of the racing course,

wherein the curb elements can be displaced, either individually or in groups, from an initial configuration of the track section into a new configuration for reshaping the racing course in this track section, and

wherein the curb elements are double T-elements having a double T-section in the cross section, and

wherein the curb elements comprise an upper side which is provided with a track topping, and

wherein the curb elements are mounted to be displaceable within the track plane from their initial configuration into a new configuration in the track section.

2. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 1, wherein an adjusting device is provided for displacing the curb elements, said adjusting device comprising a mechanical, an electrical or a pressure means actuated drive.

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3. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 1, wherein each curb element is provided with an adjusting device, preferably comprising a device for securing the new configuration and a mechanical, an electrical or a pressure means actuated drive.

4-6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) A device for modifying the layout of a vehicle racing course in a wide track section of a track comprising an upper side, said device comprising an arrangement consisting of individual curb elements located in the region of this track section of the racing course,

wherein the curb elements can be displaced, either individually or in groups, from an initial configuration of the track section into a new configuration for reshaping the racing course,

wherein individually liftable curb elements that are vertically liftable are provided in the region of the track section ~~which are,~~ the liftable curb elements being aligned flush with the upper side of the track section in their initial configuration, and further curb elements are provided that are tiltable in order to form a transition between lifted and non-lifted curb elements.

8. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 7, wherein a preferably central remote control is provided for activating, securing and deactivating the curb elements.

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9. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 7, wherein a preferably central remote control is provided for activating, securing and deactivating the curb elements.
10. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 8, wherein holding elements are provided which can be activated and deactivated by a remote control.
11. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 7, wherein curb elements having an upper and a lower portion are provided.
12. (Canceled)
13. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 7, wherein curb elements are provided, which have a trapezoidal cross-section.
- 14-15. (Canceled)
16. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 7, wherein an adjusting device is provided for displacing the curb elements, said adjusting device comprising a mechanical, an electrical or a pressure means actuated drive.
17. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 7, wherein each curb element is provided with an adjusting device, said adjusting device comprising

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a device for securing the new configuration and a mechanical, an electrical or a pressure means actuated drive.

18. (Currently Amended) A method for modifying the layout of a vehicle racing course in a wide track section of a track, wherein individual curb elements located in the region of the track section are displaced, either individually or in groups, from an initial configuration of the track section into a new configuration for reshaping the racing course in the track section, wherein to reshape the racing course in the track section, several of the curb elements located in the region of the track section are ~~displaced~~ vertically lifted from an initial configuration of the track section in which they are aligned flush with the upper side of the track section into a new configuration, and at least one of the curb elements is tilted in order to form a transition between lifted and non-lifted curb elements.

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REMARKS

Status Summary

Claims 1-4, 7-11, 13, 14, and 16-18 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-4, 7-11, 13, 14, and 16-18 presently stand rejected. Claims 4 and 14 are canceled, and claims 1, 7, and 18 are amended by the present amendment. No new matter has been introduced by the present amendments. Reconsideration of the application as amended and based on the remarks set forth hereinbelow is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3 and 14 stand rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,841,775 to Pare, hereinafter referred to as "Pare". In addition, claims 1-4, 7, 11, 13, 14, and 16-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,457,900 to Bond, hereinafter referred to as "Bond", in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,439,801 to Galiana et al., hereinafter referred to as "Galiana". Finally, claims 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bond in view of Galiana, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,509,753 to Thompson, hereinafter referred to as "Thompson". The positions of the Examiner with respect to claims 1-4, 7-11, 13, 14, and 16-18 are respectfully traversed as described below.

With regard to independent claim 1, the Examiner contends that Pare discloses a device as is recited in claim 1 except that Pare does not disclose using a

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lane modifying device in a race track. The Examiner further contends, however, that it would have been obvious to use the lane shifting device of Pare in a race track setting. It is respectfully submitted, however, that the traffic lane markers of Pare are clearly not suitable for use in a race track. As is commonly known, racing cars on a race track move at very high speeds and require corresponding safety measures to keep the race track as safe as possible. The traffic lane divider disclosed in Pare includes a stud or short spindle **17**, on which a coil spring **16** with a plastic traffic lane device **14** is placed. It is respectfully submitted that this traffic lane divider cannot be run over by a racing car. If run over by a racing car (which cannot be excluded in some racing situations), the plastic top would be ripped off of stud **17**, leaving stud **17** exposed and thus posing a danger to the following racing cars. Accordingly, a person skilled in the art would not have contemplated using the traffic line divider of Pare for a racing course.

In contrast, the curb elements of claim 1 are sturdy and can be driven over by racing cars. To further emphasize this feature of the claimed curb elements, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the curb elements are double T-elements having a double T-section in the cross section, and the curb elements comprise an upper side which is provided with a track topping. Support for these amendments can be found in the patent application as originally filed, for example at page 8, second paragraph, and in original claim 4. It is respectfully submitted that there is no disclosure in Pare that would have prompted a person skilled in the art to employ this combination of

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features, and thus the subject matter of claim 1 is not obvious in view of the disclosure of Pare and it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

In addition, the Examiner further contends that claim 1 is also rejected as obvious over Bond in view of Galiana. With regard to this rejection, it is respectfully submitted that the disclosure of Bond is fundamentally different from what is recited in claim 1. Specifically, claim 1 recites a device for modifying the layer of vehicle track comprising an arrangement of curb elements. As is commonly known, a curb is a location where a relatively raised portion (or road shoulder) meets a relatively unraised portion of a paved street. A curb thus provides the lateral boundary of a street and is not arranged across a street.

In contrast, Bond discloses speed bumps whose purpose is to slow down vehicles passing over those bumps. This is accomplished by a speed-sensitive lock mechanism that locks when the vehicle travels at a speed above a predetermined speed. On the other hand, when the vehicle travels below that speed, the lock mechanism does not lock and the plates can be depressed so that the bump no longer poses an obstacle. As a result, the speed bump device disclosed in Bond is not a curb element since it is placed across the street and not lining the street. Moreover, such a speed bump device would not be used in a vehicle racing course, as its very purpose is to slow down vehicles, whereas in a vehicle racing course the conditions are always optimized for allowing the vehicles to achieve high speeds. In fact, the speed bump device would not be used in a racing course because it would pose a high danger to vehicles traveling across it at such high speeds.

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In addition, as noted above, claim 1 has been amended to recite double T-elements, which are neither disclosed nor suggested by Bond. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is not obvious in view of the disclosure of Bond.

With regard to the rejection of claims 7 and 18 by the Examiner, it is respectfully submitted that the forgoing arguments that Bond does not disclose curb elements and that the device of Bond is not suitable for a racing course apply equally to these claims. In addition, claims 7 and 18 have been amended to recite that the curb elements are vertically liftable. Support for these amendments can be found in the patent application as originally filed, for example in Figures 4 and 5, and at page 9, first paragraph. In contrast, the plate elements of Bond are not vertically liftable. Rather, these plate elements are swiveled around an axis. Furthermore, Bond also fails to disclose a device or method that is suitable for modifying the layout of a vehicle racing course. Instead, the device of Bond merely creates an obstacle on the street. Regardless of the state in which the speed bump device is in, the layout of the course remains the same.

Further, it is respectfully submitted that the addition of Galiana and/or Thompson does not remedy these deficiencies of Bond. Specifically, Galiana describes a stationary protective barrier that can be used near a road or racetrack, and Thompson describes a motorized retractable speed bump. Neither of these references disclose, teach, or suggest devices having curb elements that are double T-elements having a double T-section in the cross section or that are vertically liftable.

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As a result, for at least the reasons stated above, it is respectfully submitted that both Pare and Bond, taken either alone or in combination with Galiana or Thompson, fail to teach or suggest every element of the devices and methods of independent claims 1, 7, and 18. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 1, 7, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn and the claims allowed at this time. In addition, claims 2 and 3 depend upon claim 1, and claims 8-11, 13, 16, and 17 depend upon claim 7. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the above remarks apply equally to these claims, and therefore the rejections of these claims should likewise be withdrawn and the claims allowed at this time.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in proper condition for allowance, and an early notice to such effect is earnestly solicited.

If any small matter should remain outstanding after the Patent Examiner has had an opportunity to review the above Remarks, the Patent Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned patent attorney in order to resolve these matters and avoid the issuance of another Official Action.

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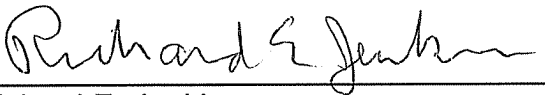
DEPOSIT ACCOUNT

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with the filing of this correspondence to Deposit Account No. 50-0426.

Respectfully submitted,

JENKINS, WILSON, TAYLOR & HUNT, P.A.

Date: March 25, 2009

By: 
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REJ/BJA/gwc

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